

TWO METHODIST ERAS

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF TWO QUADRENNIAL CONFERENCES.

The Evolution of Lay Representation. Women Delegates—Wherein the Enthusiasm of the Boy Is Confirmed by the Judgment of the Man.

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On or about the 18th of May, 1868, I reached Chicago as a delegate from southern Indiana to the soldiers and sailors' convention, and as soon as my slight duty to that meeting was done I hastened to take a look at the Methodist quadrennial conference. I am not able to convey to the young reader of today

BISHOP SIMPSON.
any idea of the feeling—a compound of awe and affection, curiosity and reverence—with which I looked on that remarkable body of men.

A boy reared in the church and accustomed from infancy to look on John and Charles Wesley as inferior only to St. Paul and St. John, and to regard Bishop Simpson as the model of piety, patriotism and eloquence, does not outgrow his impressions in the first seven years of manhood. It so happened that my entrance on the rights of manhood was contemporary with the beginning of the civil war, and so the events of the next few years had raised my feelings toward Bishop Simpson to a degree near akin to personal idolatry. Even now I smile and blush alternately when I remember how I walked many miles to Evansville to hear him lecture, and yet I feel bound to assert that in the subsequent twenty-seven years I have not made any investment in the lecture line that paid me better.

Twenty years after my first view of one it was my privilege to listen to the proceedings of another Methodist quadrennial conference, in New York city this time; and now it is the deliberate judgment of the man that the enthusiasm of the boy of 1855-65 was not overstrained, for verily there were moral giants in the west in those days. I have heard many great orators, but I have yet to hear the man who could stir the hearts of the common people more than old Richard Hargrave. I have listened to logical and scholarly expositions of the Gospel, but for a plain and practical setting forth of the whole duty of man I have heard none to exceed that of Elder Aaron Wood, of the Northwest Indiana conference. The active service of the famous Peter Cartwright and J. B. Finley was over, but the flavor of their good works still lingered among us, and the announcement that either of them would be present, health and strength permitting, at a future meeting was sufficient to rouse a fierce enthusiasm among our elders.

To one who had been all that time out of the current it seemed an odd and slightly amusing fact that while in 1868 lay representation was the great issue, in 1888 woman representation led all other topics; albeit, the former was much farther advanced in 1868 than the latter in 1888, or in 1892 for that matter. And while I listened to the scholarly and conservative remarks of Dr. J. M. Buckley I saw that this contrast was a fair index of the progress of the United States in the last thirty years. In 1860 and somewhat later voting was universally regarded as a privilege; in 1868 as a right. Then the advocate had to show cause; now the burden of proof is on the opposition. Nevertheless the church, at a greater interval, has followed exactly the same line as the body-politic. Delegates' rights have been rapidly extended till all adult males are eligible, and there, so far as the unpracticed layman's eye can see, it has stopped for a very long time, if not forever. It

PETER CARTWRIGHT.
needs but a glance to see that in the civil organization the widening of the suffrage reached its maximum in 1870, and that since that time more men have been disfranchised on one pretext or another than have been enfranchised, and it is not easy to prove that the reaction has not had some effect in the church.

At the time I wondered why the quadrennial conference of 1868 did not attract more attention, but I think I understand it now. Never since Sumter was fired on had there been a time of such intense excitement, particularly in the west, as the first three weeks of May, 1868. First there was the impeachment trial of President John-

son, which shook the very foundations of society. Churches were divided, old friendships were sundered, business partnerships were broken, and in some sections there were defiant threats of civil war. Such old and tried and true Unionists as Fessenden of Maine, Trumbull of Illinois and Grimes of Iowa were denounced as three shades blacker than Benedict Arnold and a little meaner than Judas, while the comparatively obscure Ross of Kansas was openly threatened with violence, and advised to follow the example of his predecessor and put a pistol to his head. If any reader thinks I exaggerate, let him glance at the New York Tribune of those days. Its editorials now read as if they were dictated in a madhouse.

At the same time local conventions were being held to select delegates to the national Republican convention. It went without discussion that Grant was to be named for president, so all the heat and fury of the contest raged around the vice presidency. Grant being credited to Illinois, the east very naturally claimed the second place on the ticket, but the central west had set its heart on Schuyler Colfax, and in the range of my movements at that time in Indiana a bare suggestion of any other candidate was resented as a sort of local treason. In short, I am sure I do not exaggerate in saying that the very air of our section was overcharged with superheated political ozone.

And in the midst of all this excitement a grave body of Methodist elders met in Chicago, and undisturbed by the fierce party warfare raging all around them, discussed and arranged the affairs of the church with an eloquence and ability which then aroused my enthusiasm and now demands my profound admiration and respect.

How different was the situation in 1888. The country had learned to like its politics temperately. Slavery was a sort of historic nightmare; reconstruction a fever, bearing much the same relation to national life as the diseases of childhood do to the life of a vigorous man. The age of high and flaming oratory about the war, the flag and the "eagle" had passed; the age of the calculator and political economist had come. The most exciting issue of the day turned on a difference of five cents in the tariff. But sin and misery remained as ever appalling facts, moral accountability and retribution were as real as ever to the Methodists of 1868, and while they discussed methods of work and the civil polity of the church the curious spectator could not but contrast the two conferences—twenty years apart.

It was apparent at a glance that the veterans of 1850-50 were gone. The eloquent tones of Bishop Simpson, heard for almost exactly fifty years in the Methodist pulpit, were silenced for this world in 1884, soon after he closed the conference of that year. The Methodists have their proper place for him, but to the boys of Indiana, forty years ago, he is still the loved president of Asbury (De Pauw) university, and to the soldiers he is still the friend and supporter of Abraham Lincoln. Peter Cartwright was already so much a veteran in 1860 that it was accounted a privilege to see and hear him, yet he lived till 1872, dying at eighty-seven. Of the elders and revivalists who made western camp meetings lively in 1850 and thereabouts there was not one.

To the western man of the early days, however, there was a suggestion of the humorous in seeing in the list of delegates such names as Will Cumbuck, Amos Shinkle, John W. Ray, J. C. Ridpath and Newland De Pauw. Their presence, however, was a living proof that since 1868 lay representation had become a very much accomplished fact. And it was calculated to raise a smile in the same observer to hear on the very first day a notice of protest read against the admission as delegates of Amanda C. Rippey of Kansas, Mary C. Nind of Minnesota, Angie F. Newman of Nebraska, Lizzie D. Van Kirk of Pennsylvania and Frances E. Willard of Illinois. The woman question was up at the very start, and it remained the big issue through most of the conference.

Bishop Simpson, who made the closing address in 1884; Bishop Wiley, who offered the closing prayer, and Bishop Harris, who read the closing hymn, had passed away; but Bishop Thomas Bowman, in the fiftieth year of his work as a minister and sixteen years a bishop, called the conference to order. When the reports were read, the observer was again reminded of the fallibility of the prophets of twenty years before. For some time after the close of the war predictions were abundant that a general demoralization would ensue, and for some reason I never could make out it was taken for granted that the Methodist church would suffer most. In truth the denomination had never passed two more prosperous decades. And as the conference of 1892 is soon to give us the latest figures, it only remains for this observer to add that, so far as the layman's eye can see, Methodism is now in the full vigor of youth, going forward in its work with all the advantages of experience and improved organization and with no loss of enthusiasm.

J. H. BEARD.

Comrade G. W. Hammond
of Root Post, G. A. R., of Syracuse, N. Y.

WOUNDED AT GETTYSBURG

C. I. Hood & Co., Lowell, Mass.
"I was in the Army of the Potomac and in the great battle of Gettysburg was struck in the ankle by a minnie ball, which smashed the bone. My leg was amputated in the field hospital, and after a long time it healed. I was discharged and went home. After 8 years

MY WOUND BROKE OPEN

afresh. Dr. Pease amputated an inch of the bone and it healed. Four years later it once more opened, and for eight years how I suffered. I do not believe it possible for a human being to suffer worse agony. At this time I had to go on crutches, being unable to wear a wooden leg. Whenever possible I relieved my sufferings by taking opiate, but when I was obliged to go without it, I suffered fearfully and thought I could not stand it. I never thought I could get with my limited means. Physicians said I would never be any better. Finally my

BLOOD BECAME POISONED

and it broke out all over my face and on some parts of my body so that my face is all covered with scars now. One day I read of what Hood's Sarsaparilla would do. The first dollar I got I sent and bought a bottle and took it to the doctor. After two or three weeks my wife in massaging my leg, said it seemed to be improving, and after taking

HOOD'S SARSAPARILLA

a few months, thank God (and I say it reverently), the sores all over my body had healed, and now, four years later, have never shown any sign of reappearing." GEORGE M. HAMMOND, 219 Magnolia Street, Syracuse, N. Y.

COL. C. A. WEAVER

Commander of Root Post, G. A. R., himself a one armed veteran, fully confirms Mr. Hammond's statement, and J. L. Belden, the pharmacist, also endorses it.

Hood's Pills cure Sick Headache.

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